

**1972**

**High School Wrestling  
Forecast  
(Inaugural)**

**Written By  
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1972

ONE OF THE MOST INTRIGUING QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS YEAR'S STATE WRESTLING TOURNAMENT IS WHETHER THE CLEVELAND AREA CAN REGAIN THEIR ONCE TAKEN FOR GRANTED DOMINANCE. IN 1971 THE CLEVELAND AREA GRABBED BUT 5 OF 13 CHAMPIONSHIPS IN BOTH AAA AND A-AA; FAR BELOW THEIR USUAL TOTALS. THIS COULD BE THE YEAR TO SEE, ONCE AND FOR ALL, IF THE REST OF THE STATE IS FINALLY GAINING EQUALITY WITH THIS DISTRICT. PERHAPS A QUICK LOOK AT EACH WEIGHT CLASS MIGHT BETTER CLARIFY THIS PICTURE.

AT 98# DAVE KENNEY OF JOHN MARSHALL TOWERS FAR ABOVE THE REST IN HIS CLASS. STATE RUNNER-UP LAST YEAR, KENNEY HAS NOT YET BEEN TESTED THIS SEASON. WITH VIRTUALLY NONE OF THE DOWNSTATE 98'S RETURNING AT THAT WEIGHT THIS SEASON, KENNEY MAY RECEIVE HIS TOUGHEST MATCHES IN THE CCC DISTRICT WITH DUBEL (MAPLE HTS.), LIPTAK (MENTOR), PICONE (GARFIELD), AND BOLZ (WILLOUCHBY SOUTH) MAKING THE CHALLENGE. IN ANY EVENT CLEVELAND SHOULD REGAIN THIS TITLE GRABBED OFF BY TOLEDO LAST YEAR.

THERE ARE, AS ALWAYS, A NUMBER OF STRONG 105 POUNDERS THROUGHOUT THE STATE BUT NONE SEEM AS STRONG AS STEVE KIBLER (VALLEY FORGE) AND DUANE WALL (MAPLE HTS.). IF A DUAL MEET BETWEEN THESE TWO POWERHOUSES COULD BE ARRANGED, THEIR MATCH WOULD CERTAINLY BE THE HIGHLIGHT. BRUCE HAMBRICK (DELAWARE),

FOURTH IN THE STATE AT 98#, IS PROBABLY THE BEST OUT-OF-DISTRICT RETURNER, BUT HE HAS ALREADY BEEN DEFEATED THIS YEAR BY PARMA'S FINE JUNIOR, TOM VON STERNBERG. GREG KESSELRING, ALREADY A 2-TIME STATE QUALIFIER THOUGH ONLY A JUNIOR, RON MATHEWS FROM DAYTON, AND ROBIN EMERY (NORTH OLMSTED) ARE THREE OTHER STRONG CONTENDERS.

SEVEN STATE QUALIFIERS COME IN THIS YEAR AT 112#, BUT UNDOUBTEDLY THE FINEST OF ALL, STATE CHAMPION RAY CRUZADO HAS BEEN KICKED OFF THE LORAIN SQUAD FOR DISCIPLINARY REASONS. RIGHT BELOW CRUZADO COME THREE STRONG BOYS SEAN GAREL (SHAW), KEITH RICHARDSON (CENT. HOWER), AND DAVE BRAEUNIG (SANDUSKY). IN ANOTHER YEAR EACH WOULD BE A STRONG FAVORITE FOR THE TITLE, BUT THIS YEAR THEY'LL BE FORTUNATE TO STAY AT THE TOP OF THE HEAP; FOR RIGHT BELOW THEM STAND FOUR OTHER BOYS WHO QUALIFIED FOR THE STATE LAST YEAR AND POSSESS CONSIDERABLE SKILLS (NOBLE, O'CONNER, KATCHMAN, AND RHODES).

SIX STATE QUALIFIERS ALSO RETURN AT 119# BUT ITS PROBABLE THAT NONE OF THEM ARE STRONG ENOUGH TO GAIN THE STATE CROWN. THIS LOOKS LIKE A WEIGHT WHERE A DARKHORSE LIKE SKROWONSKI (MAPLE HTS.) OR YOUNG (VALLEY FORCE) MIGHT WIN DURING A WEEKEND WHEN THEY "PUT IT ALL TOGETHER." THE TWO RETURNING QUALIFIERS FROM THE CLEVELAND AREA, DON MC KEE (WEST TECH) AND DENNY SCHALL

(MAYFIELD) ARE BOTH COMPETENT WORKMEN, BUT LOOK MORE LIKE STATE PLACE FINISHERS THAN STATE CHAMPS. DOWNSTATE MARK SANDERS (DAY, STEBBINS) FOURTH LAST YEAR AT THIS WEIGHT AND CLYDE JACKSON (WARREN WESTERN RESERVE) SEEMED DOOMED TO RUNNER-UP TYPE FINISHES OF SOME SORT.

SO FAR THE CLEVELAND DISTRICT WOULD PROBABLY HAVE TO BE RANKED AS FAVORITES AT EACH OF THE FIRST FOUR WEIGHT CLASSES, THOUGH THERE CERTAINLY IS ROOM FOR PLENTY OF ARGUMENT AT 112#. HOWEVER, JEFF GUYTON (TOLEDO ST. FRANCIS) APPEARS TO DOMINATE THE 126# CLASS AS DECISIVELY AS DAVE KENNEY DOES AT 98#. WHILE THREE OTHER STATE QUALIFIERS RETURN AT THIS WEIGHT INCLUDING JOHN BLAZEK (ST. ED) FIFTH IN THE STATE LAST YEAR, NO WRESTLER APPEARS TO HAVE A REAL GOOD SHOT AT A HEALTHY GUYTON.

STEVE FINK (MAPLE HTS.) SHOULD LEAD A STRONG CONTINGENT OF CLEVELAND DISTRICT 132'S INTO THE STATE TOURNEY THIS YEAR. BACKED UP BY THE LIKES OF JEFF SCHOENEMAN, JEFF SCHICK, BENNETT PARKER, LUKE BLAZEK, AND PETE DELUCA THIS DISTRICT SHOULD AGAIN DO WELL AT A WEIGHT WHERE ALL FOUR OF OUR WRESTLERS PLACED LAST YEAR. STRENGTH DOWNSTATE SHOULD COME FROM MIKE SAYRE (HILLIARD) AND MIKE MAYROMATIS (STEUBENVILLE) ALONG WITH A STRONG GROUP FROM THE TOLEDO AREA.

THIS IS A MOST UNUSUAL YEAR AT 138# WHERE THERE ARE FEW RETURNING WRESTLERS WITH OUTSTANDING CREDENTIALS. STATE QUALIFIER, STEVE BACK (REYNOLDSBURG), IS DOWN FROM 145# AND IS RANKED NO. 1 IN THE COLUMBUS AREA. RIGHT BEHIND HIM IS MARK STANLEY (UPPER ARLINGTON) WHO ALSO WENT TO THE STATE TOURNEY LAST YEAR. IN CLEVELAND THERE IS A JUMBLED PICTURE AT THIS WEIGHT WITH MANY FINE WRESTLERS, BUT NONE OF A DOMINATING INFLUENCE. WITH SO MANY EVENLY MATCHED WRESTLERS IT'S ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO GUESS WHO'LL EVEN REPRESENT OUR DISTRICT, BUT IT DOES SEEM FAIR TO BELIEVE THAT WHOEVER IT IS WILL BE UNDERDOGS IN COLUMBUS.

CLEVELAND PROBABLY HAS MORE FINE 145# WRESTLERS THAN THE REST OF THE STATE PUT TOGETHER. DAVE STEINMETZ (VALLEY FORCE), DALE ANTOLINO (MAPLE HTS.) BILL GORE (BRUSH), GARY MACIEJOWSKI (BEDFORD), PAUL BUEHLE (BEREA), NILS JAEGERSON (LAKEWOOD), AND AL HESS (MAYFIELD) ARE SEVEN OF THE FINEST WRESTLERS YOU COULD IMAGINE. WHATEVER FOUR DO QUALIFY WILL SURELY DESTROY WHATEVER ELSE MAKES IT TO COLUMBUS AS ALL SHOULD PROBABLY PLACE. THE FIGHT WILL BE TO GET TO COLUMBUS.

WHAT CLEVELAND LACKS IN QUANTITY AT 155# IS EASILY MADE UP WITH QUALITY.

VAN KIRKENDALL (BEREA) AND JAMIE KURTZ (JOHN MARSHALL) ARE BOTH OUTSTANDING 3-YEAR LETTERMEN WITH PREVIOUS STATE TOURNEY EXPERIENCE. IN A YEAR WHERE A LOT OF STRONG BOYS ARE AT THIS WEIGHT THESE TWO COULD STILL FINISH ONE - TWO.

THERE ARE SIX RETURNING STATE QUALIFIERS AT 167#, AND NONE ARE FROM THE CLEVELAND DISTRICT. IN FACT FOUR COME FROM THE AKRON AREA WHERE ONLY THREE CAN ADVANCE TO COLUMBUS. YET EVEN WITH THESE NUMBERS THE CLEVELAND BOYS SHOULD DO WELL. LAMKA (SOUTH), LISKE (W. SOUTH), BEECH (MAPLE HTS.) MEVITZ (S.J.) OR JACKSON (AD. KING) ARE ALL EXPERIENCED WRESTLERS WHO HAVE DISTRICT EXPERIENCE. THE TOUGHEST COMPETITION FROM DOWNSTATE SHOULD COME FROM JAY ORTLIP (UPPER ARLINGTON), LARRY RICE (NORTON), AND ERNIE BROWN (BUCHTEL).

THREE TRULY GREAT WRESTLERS RETURN AT 175# -- STATE CHAMP, MIKE DANIELS (HUGHES), STATE RUNNER-UP, KEVIN QUIQLEY (WESTLAKE), AND STATE PLACE FINISHER, KEN HANSEN (MUELLER). WHILE DANIELS WON THE TITLE LAST YEAR, HANSEN BEAT HIM THREE TIMES IN THE CINCINNATI AREA, AND MISSED ONLY A FOURTH OPPORTUNITY DUE TO AN OVERTIME LOSS TO QUIQLEY. THE SUSPICION PERSISTS THAT DANIELS GOT ALL THE REFEREEING "BREAKS" LAST YEAR AND PERHAPS THINGS WILL BE DIFFERENT

IN 1972. TIM SWEIGARD (ELYRIA) AND FRED SMITH (STOW) COULD ALSO BE STRONG  
CONTENDERS FOR PLACES THIS YEAR.

1972 IS DEFINITELY THE YEAR OF THE 185-POUNDER. FROM ALL OVER THE STATE  
GREAT CANDIDATES ARE APPEARING ALMOST DAILY WITH EACH SEEMINGLY HAVING BETTER  
CREDENTIALS THAN THE LAST. THEY'LL ALL HAVE TO GET BY REGAL HAYNES, LAST  
YEAR STATE RUNNER-UP AT THIS WEIGHT, THOUGH, AND THAT WILL BE NO EASY TASK.  
IN CLEVELAND DOUG TABOR (BEDFORD), DON HAYES (BRUSH), AND PERHAPS BOB AVIS  
(N. ROY.) SHOULD PROVE MOST DIFFICULT COMPETITION. TABOR, IN PARTICULAR,  
HAS LOOKED OUTSTANDING. RICK LAYMAN (WORTHINGTON) AND CRAIG SNEE (JACKSON)  
BOTH PLACED AT THIS WEIGHT LAST YEAR, AND THEY'LL NOT BE TAKEN LIGHTLY EITHER.  
ALL IN ALL THIS WEIGHT SHOULD MAKE COLLEGE RECRUITERS DROOL AT THE THOUGHT  
OF ALL THIS MUSCLE:

ALMOST EVERY YEAR SOMEONE NOBODY HAS EVER HEARD OF TAKES THE HEAVYWEIGHT  
TITLE, AND USUALLY THAT PERSON IS FROM SOMEWHERE OTHER THAN CLEVELAND. SINCE  
1963 ONLY TIM KARDOFF IN 1970 HAS WRESTED THIS TITLE AWAY FROM SOMEBODY OUT-  
SIDE THIS DISTRICT. THIS YEAR LOOKS LIKE IT WILL FOLLOW RECENT FORM. WHILE  
THERE ARE A LOT OF GOOD HEAVYWEIGHTS HERE NONE HAS THE BULK/SPEED COMBINATION  
THAT USUALLY WINS.

IN SUMMARY, CLEVELAND BOYS SHOULD PROBABLY COME BACK WITH SEVEN TO NINE TITLES AND A WHOLE RAFT OF PLACE FINISHES. WITH THE NEW BRACKETS, INSTITUTED IN 1971, CLEVELAND DISTRICT QUALIFIERS CANNOT MEET TILL THE SEMI-FINALS WHICH SHOULD INSURE A TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF MEDALS COMING NORTH THIS YEAR.

ONE FINAL NOTE, PERHAPS THE MOST COMPETITIVE WEIGHT BRACKET IN THE STATE THIS YEAR IS AT A-AA' 112#. TWO DEFENDING STATE CHAMPS (DIELI AND TOMPKINS), A STATE RUNNER-UP (COWDY), A 3RD PLACE FINISHER (HRADEK), A 4TH PLACE FINISHER (STALNAKER), AND A 5TH SPOT MEDALIST (SHANNON) WILL ALL VIE FOR THAT TITLE WITH PREDICTABLE FIREWORKS. BEYOND THAT TWO OTHER STATE QUALIFIERS FROM LAST YEAR WILL ALSO BEAT THAT WEIGHT.